

September 28, 2010

Dear Colleague:

This Thursday, the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program is set to expire. Since its inception over a quarter-century ago, the SBIR program has increased federal agency access to innovative ideas, technologies and capabilities through its support for entrepreneurs and small businesses, and is often described as the most successful government R&D program.

To prevent the program from lapsing before Congress can complete work on a comprehensive reauthorization, the Senate passed S. 3839 last week to extend the authorization through January 31, 2011.

During negotiations over S. 3839, the Senate made clear that it would not accept an extension that stopped in December. Today the House is set to consider on suspension an amendment to S. 3839 which would change the extension to December 3.

Without Senate support for a December extension, proceeding with a House amendment to S. 3839 as planned will ensure that the SBIR program lapses on Thursday.

Instead, the House should take up S. 3839 unchanged and clear it for the President, guaranteeing no lapse in this vital program and no uncertainty for the small businesses nationwide that depend on it.

Sincerely,

/s  
Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress

/s  
Edward J. Markey  
Member of Congress